THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

[ESTABLISHED 1840].

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (II. TIM. 1: 8).

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BE YE PERFECT.

BY DR. JAMES E. TALMAGE, OF THE COUNCIL OF THE TWELVE OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.

SOME knowledge of the attributes of God is essential to intelligent worship. Granted that finite man cannot comprehend infinity; yet consistency forbids our carrying this self-evident truth to the extent of saying that because God is infinite, man can have no conception of His nature or character.

If God be but a vast, formless nonentity, filling all space and therefore illimitable, substanceless, devoid of body and parts, incapable of emotions and passions, He is not my Father, I am not His son. To the contrary, the Scriptures affirm that humankind are the children of God, fashioned after His own likeness in both spirit and body; and, conversely, He must be of definite form and feature, possessed of a body perfect in all its parts, and be likewise perfect in all His acts.

On the night of the betrayal, while comforting the sorrow-stricken Eleven by solemn and lofty discourse, Jesus said unto them: "Ye believe in God, believe also in me * * * If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him."

The faithful Philip broke in with an appealing request: "Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." The Lord's response was an unequivocal avowal that He was His Father's exact presentment, so that whosoever had seen Him had seen what and whom the Father was like. Note the explicit and withal pathetic words of the heavy-hearted Christ: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet thou hast not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" (See John 14: 1-10).

Jesus Christ, the Man, was and is in the express likeness of His Father's Person; and, since the consummation of His mission in the flesh and His victory over death whereby comes the resurrection, He has been exalted to the Father's state of glory and perfection (See Heb. 1: 1-4).

Though the thoughts and activities of God be as far above the ways of men as the heavens are above the earth, they are nevertheless of a kind with human yearnings and aspirations, so far as these be the fruitage of holiness, purity, and righteous endeavor. The distant stars, at which we gaze with an awe that develops into worshipful praise as we learn the amazing facts of their size, orbital movements, and constitution, are, after all, of the family of worlds to which this earth belongs.

Though our planet be but as a drop of the ocean compared with many of the greater orbs, it is not the least of all; and what we have come to know of other worlds is primarily based on analogy with the phenomena of our own. Notwithstanding that Deity is perfect and humanity grossly imperfect, we may learn much of the Higher by a study of the lower in its true and normal phases.

As an impressive and profound climax to one division of the sublime discourse, the Sermon on the Mount, the Master said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5: 48).

What led up to this utterance, calling for the explanatory "therefore," by which the relation of premises and conclusion is expressed? A studious reading of the entire chapter gives the answer. Following the Beatitudes and certain well-defined admonitions and precepts, the Lord made plain the distinction between the law under which Israel had professedly lived from Moses down, and the higher requirements of the gospel taught by Christ. Again and again the introductory "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time" is followed by the authoritative "But I say unto you." Obedience to the gospel, which comprises all the essentials of the law, was enjoined as the means by which men may become perfect, even in the sense in which the Father in heaven is perfect.

It is a significant fact that when Jesus Christ, a resurrected and glorified Being, visited the Nephite branch of the House of Israel on the western continent, He included Himself with the Father as the existent ideal of perfection, as thus appears: "Therefore I would that ye should be perfect even as I, or your Father who is in heaven is perfect" (Book of Mormon, III. Nephi 12: 48).

The road to exaltation and perfection is opened through the gospel of Jesus Christ. We cannot rationally construe our Lord's administration as implying an impossibility. We are not required to assume that man in mortality can attain the perfection of an exalted and glorified personage, such as either the Father or Jesus Christ. However, man may be perfect in his sphere in a way analogous to that of more advanced intelligences in their several

spheres; yet the relative perfection of the lower is vastly inferior to that of the higher.

We can conceive of a college freshman attaining perfection in his class; his record may be a hundred per cent. on the scale of efficiency; yet the honors of the upper classman are beyond; and graduation, though to him remote, is assured if he do but maintain his high standing to the end.

After all, individual perfection is relative, and must be gauged by the law operative upon us. In 1832 the Lord thus spake through His Prophet Joseph Smith, "And again, verily I say unto you, that which is governed by law is also preserved by law, and perfected and sanctified by the same" (Doctrine and Covenants 88: 34).

The law of the gospel is a perfect law; and the sure effect of full obedience thereto is perfection. Of those who attain exaltation in the celestial kingdom, Christ has declared, "These are they who are just men made perfect through Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, who wrought out this perfect atonement through the shedding of his own blood" (Doc. and Cov. 76: 69).

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST DISPELS FEAR.

A GENTLEMAN whom I recently met remarked, "Why do you go around teaching about Christ? Do you realize that Christianity makes all people cowards?" Then he proceeded to show how Christianity, as he had been taught it, had made him fear life and death.

His case is one of many. Some ministers endeavor to hold their flocks by means of fear implanted by lurid stories of a mystical God and His more mysterious dealings with mankind. But such methods and doctrines were not the teachings of our Savior, nor are they the teachings of His servants to-day.

Fear and dread of life and death are emotions foreign to those who have indeed put on Christ. Our Savior taught, "My doctrine is not mine but his that sent me. If any man will do his will he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John 7: 16, 17). Such is the teaching of God's servants to-day, as well as it was the teaching of all God's servants from Adam until now. This declaration has been tested in all ages, and has not been found wanting. By doing God's will, men have gained a testimony that God is our Father, and that Jesus Christ is the Redeemer of the world. They have learned that obedience to the gospel of Christ will exalt them to the kingdom of God.—With this faith, or assurance, there is no doubt in the hearts of the saints of God. They fear neither life nor death, for they know that they will be resurrected and "judged according to the works done in the flesh." They approach the grave with calm serenity that is characteristic of those who have unwavering faith in our

heavenly Father's promises. They know the truth, and the truth has made them free from fear and doubt of what follows death. They know that they will reap the fruits of their sowing.

The Bible and Book of Mormon are replete with instances of men and of people who have gained an abiding faith in God by doing His will, and that faith has given its possessors courage and strength to keep the laws of God in the face of the persecutions and revilings of their fellowmen. Noah and his sons built the Ark amid the derisive shouts of those to whom they endeavored to preach the gospel; Abraham offered his son as a sacrifice, when commanded by God, though his whole soul must have rebelled at the thought of it. Job suffered dire afflictions, yet denied not his God, though friends mocked him, and it appeared that even God had forgotten him. The followers of our Savior also suffered persecution and death at the hands of their enemies. The same faith encouraged Lehi and his colony to leave their homes and go into an unknown land at our Lord's command. Nephi, Mosiah, Abinadi, Alma, Ammon, and others spoken of in the Book of Mormon, were willing to sacrifice everything for the gospel's sake. They did not fear life or death. They trusted implicitly in their God.

The early saints of this dispensation have shown what courage and comfort the gospel brings. Our Prophet and the Patriarch, his brother, went to their death without fear. The saints endured with courage the persecutions heaped upon them. Led by their God, they left their persecutors behind, and wended their weary way across the plains of America, facing danger and hardship willingly and cheerfully. After a hard day's march, they would gather around their camp-fires and sing praises to God. We, who are living to-day, admire their spirit, and sing with them:

"Come, come, ye Saints, no toil nor labor fear,
But with joy wend your way;"

and then,

"And should we die before our journey's through,
Happy day! All is well!
We then are free from toil and sorrow too:
With the just, we shall dwell.
But if our lives are spared again,
To see the saints their rest obtain,
O how we'll make this chorus swell—
All is well! All is well!"

Surely no man could ask for more freedom from fear of life and death than these faithful ones had obtained by obedience to the gospel.

The gospel drives fear from the hearts of those who accept it and live it. Those in Zion who are living the gospel are ever ready to go to any part of the world and proclaim the message of

peace to all people. The saints who have heeded this message forsake wealth, friends, and loved ones, for the assurance they have of the message being of God. They fear not the world nor its evils, knowing that if they lose their lives for the gospel's sake, they shall find them.

Death to those who know not God, is a calamity. The sting of death, and its accompanying sorrows, are greatly removed from the hearts of the Latter-day Saints. We face death, knowing that we shall be able to meet our loved ones again and renew our associations with them. With Job we exclaim, "And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."

Such are the results of true Christianity. Fear of death and fear of life here and of the life in the hereafter are overcome by a true and living faith, which gives us strength and courage to meet the battles and trials of life with brave hearts. We fear no man, but we fear Him "who can destroy both body and soul."

Johannesburg, South Africa. LEONARD A. ROBINS.

A CONCEPTION OF LIFE AND ITS PURPOSE.

EVERY day we hear the rather hackneyed phrase, "What is life?" Yet, how few think about it at all, and of those who do give it a thought, how few answer it correctly?

Life is a gift.

The usual reception of a gift is to place a certain value on it, more or less, according to the esteem in which we hold the giver. For instance, if we were so fortunate as to receive a gift from the king, we should think much of it. Some people are very proud to show even the king's signature.

Life is the greatest gift the King of kings could give us. How do we prize it?

The surest way to please the giver of anything is to put his gift to its intended purpose. The purpose of our life is perfection. No one need say, "Perfection is impossible"; we not only can be, but we are commanded to be perfect. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." There we have the example, no mean one, but the highest.

Christ never gave a commandment we cannot keep. Is it too high a standard? I think not. Remember, Paul said, "I can do all things in Christ which strengtheneth me."

Along with our gift of life there are various talents or accessories given to us, according to our capability of using them; and these, in time, become so combined with life as to be inseparable from it. Some have beauty given to them; others, wisdom; others, tact; and so on. Some may be able to use more than one talent, but if we possess only one, we must use every effort to bring it to perfection.

Some people are so narrow-minded as to say that beauty, one of the accessories I have mentioned, is a snare. I think they are making a mistake, for God's gifts are good, and beauty is a gift, not a handicap. God loves beauty. We have only to look around us to be convinced of the truth of that assertion. The sun rising and setting every day is a miracle of beauty, and the same may be said of the lofty mountains capped with snow, and their various shades, from pale blue in the morning to purple in the evening; of the valleys with their lights and shades; the trees with their different coloring at the various seasons; the glorious flowers, from the pure white lily to the flaming peony. Even in the animal kingdom we find exquisite beauty. Consider the horse, for instance. What beautiful line and color! And then, in the human form we see the very perfection of beauty. But all gifts, even those that are good, can be put to a wrong use and become a curse.

Some who have only a few talents blame the Giver, or rail at what they call Fate. That is wrong. We all receive just what we fit ourselves to make use of. A poet has well said:

"Fame, place, and title find a fitting use.
And rightfully demand all reverence due.
But, envy not the empty lot of man
Who, winning without merit, wins in vain.
Greatness, true greatness, mightiness of mind,
And greater greatness, grandeur of the soul,
Tell but one tale,—capacity, not place,
Capacity, whose sire, experience,
Whose ancestors, innate intelligence,
Original, inborn nobility,
As oft in hut, as mansion, have their home."

The more we strive to fulfil the purpose of our lives, the more we develop an inheritance, which will be the wonder of eternity. Striving to do our best, even though we apparently fail, strengthens our spiritual muscles, and very often our physical ones.

"Fare on, full sure, the greatest glory comes,
And swiftest growth, from serving human kind."

Have you ever seen a caterpillar emerge from its covering? It looks as if one might do it a kindness by trying to assist it, but such assistance would in all probability cripple it, and make it a weak, sickly thing, instead of the beautiful being God intended it to be.

A little child gets many a tumble before it eventually learns to walk. So with us. Our efforts at attainment strengthen our will-power and endurance. We learn, through repeated failures, the road to success. Let us not become discouraged, if we are aiming at perfection. We *must* become perfect; therefore, perfection is not beyond our reach.

EMILY W. FOOTE.

GATHERING PRE-ORDAINED.

WHEN the right time comes the way will be opened wherever that spot may be in the north country, where the remnant are left of those ten tribes, having the record of the visitation of the Savior to them and the writings of their prophets, and they will be brought forth; and the Latter-day Saints in their tabernacles will not only have the Bible, containing the record of the Jews, the Book of Mormon containing the records of the Nephites, and the writings of the prophets of the latter days in the Doctrine and Covenants, but they will have the records from the tribes of Israel that were led to the north; and all these records coming together will pave the way for the coming forth of the remainder of the great record spoken of in the Book of Mormon, which contains the history of God's dealings with mankind away back from the beginning. We will have these records in our midst, and we will learn a great many things, or our children and grandchildren will, concerning God's purposes in relation to the human family, that we have not fully understood before. But we know this—we Latter-day Saints, those who are in the faith, who have not only been baptized with water but by the Holy Ghost and the fire of prophecy, who are really baptized into Christ and have tried to put on Christ and emulate Him in all His virtues—we know that God is at work in the world and that everything that occurs, no matter what it may be, is under the hand of Providence and that He is over all. Not that He stirs up nations to bloodshed; not that He brings woe and pain into the world. * * * Transgression of the laws of Deity bring naturally their consequences in trouble, in sorrow, in pain, in darkness, and in death; but the design of God is to bring forth light and life, truth, justice, and mercy, and everything that is good and great and honorable and beautiful, to admire and to adopt. God will overrule all these events now occurring on the continent of Europe, and our association with them as a nation. Whatever our duty may be we should perform it, and as sure as we live the Lord will overrule all of this for good; and the principles of this government, of which we form a part, thank God! will go forth to the whole world. Monarchy, and aristocracy, and tyranny, and despotism, are destined to be trampled down in the dust, and light, and life, and liberty, and truth will prevail, and good government will prevail. The time will come when all people will enjoy it, but before that time arrives there is to be a period of darkness, and sorrow, and pain, and tumult, earthquake, famine, pestilence, and other horrors. There will be not only "rumors of wars" but actual wars, and the time will come when war, as the Prophet Joseph Smith predicted, will be poured out upon all nations. That will precede the time of peace that shall come afterwards by the reign of the Prince of Peace, Jesus the Christ.—PRESIDENT CHARLES W. PENROSE.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 1918.

EDITORIAL.

WAR STORIES AND THOUGHTS SUGGESTED.

BROTHER HAROLD MCKNIGHT and Brother William Mercer, of Liverpool, have been home from the front for a few days, enjoying a well-earned rest among their friends, after several months of strennons service. Both were in excellent health and spirits, and testified of the goodness of the Lord towards them, expressing their appreciation of the gospel and their determination to endeavor to remain faithful under all circumstances.

Brother McKnight addressed the Saints on Sunday evening, March the 10th, and related some of his experiences as an evidence of God's protecting care over him, in answer to the prayers of faith that had been offered in his behalf. Among the incidents he referred to were these:

One day, when they were ordered to advance, the barrage fire of the other side swept the ground with awful destruction. Men seemed to fall as grass before the mowing-machine. Then the company to which he belonged moved forward. For a moment the firing seemed to cease, and the next rain of shells went over their heads and fell to the rear of them. No one could account for this, on natural grounds, the speaker said, for the barrage fire is supposed to sweep every inch of territory as it moves forward, but he knew that God's protecting hand had been over him.

Then it became his duty, together with some others, to look after the wounded, and render such first aid as he could. Brother McKnight took occasion to say that, although this humane work was done in full view of the enemy, not a shot was fired at them. Others, he was sorry to say, had not been so fortunate, but he was only relating his own experiences.

There were many dying around him, and he could not but take notice of how their minds were occupied while they were passing into the great Beyond. Some asked earnestly what they could do to be saved, and there was an opportunity to tell them of the way to life and salvation. One boy he noticed particularly. This boy was talking to his mother. To him the scenes of strife and blood had passed, and he was living again in the peaceful home of his childhood, his feeble hand, as it were, resting again in hers who gave him the life that was now ebbing away rapidly.

Shortly afterwards the speaker was detailed for some duty that took him away for a moment from the position he occupied. When

he returned, he found that the man who had taken his place had been taken off. He was lying there, dead.

More than once on this eventful day, Brother McKnight said, he was hit by pieces of shrapnel, but though his clothes were torn and penetrated, and though he felt sore, his skin was not bruised.

At one time, the speaker said, he sat down between two men, when a shell came across. It burst. One piece killed the man on one side of him, and then it continued on its deadly mission and hurled the man on the other side into eternity. But the speaker was unhurt. How this happened he could not explain. No one could. But he could say that he knew that God had taken care of him, and he acknowledged the hand of his heavenly Father in the preservation of his life.

All these incidents occurred in one day, and the speaker said he felt, when looking backwards, that he had every reason to be thankful for the blessings he had received.

The following little war story, of a somewhat different character from the thrilling incidents related by Brother McKnight, may also be of interest to our readers. It shows how the Latter-day Saints in the army service are as ready for duties of a spiritual nature, when required, as for military work. It is copied from a Salt Lake City paper of recent date, to the columns of which it had found its way from a letter written by a boy with the United States forces to his mother, who lives in the far-famed capital of the State of Utah. The boy, by the way, is a Catholic.

In his letter he says that his corps, one day, had been called together to attend funeral services for one of their comrades. For some reason the chaplain of the regiment did not come, and it looked as if the funeral would be a very stiff affair. The commanding officer, who might have conducted the services, was not disposed to do so, and after a moment's hesitation, asked if there was a "Mormon" elder present. Seven hands went up. They were called to the front, and the proceedings were left to them. One of them immediately took charge and called upon others to lead in prayer, to sing, and to speak, and the Catholic soldier tells his mother in the letter that it was the most impressive funeral service he ever attended. On that occasion, and by the side of that grave, he adds, he learned something of what practical religion is.

That strikes the very key-note of "Mormonism." The faith which the world so designates is eminently a practical religion. It is religion brought to bear on business, on social relations, on politics, and on the affairs of every-day life, be it in peace or war. That is the reason why "Mormonism," so-called, is the religion of the future, and the means by which the world will be saved from all the evils that now cling to it and retard its progress in righteousness.

From these particular incidents of the war—mere drops in a storm-lashed, furious ocean of human passion and strife—our thoughts naturally turn to the general aspects of the gigantic, world-encircling conflict. How did it all happen, and when will it end?

To the first of these questions many answers have been given. Both sides have been blamed. Militarism, commercialism, dynastic pride, each has been arraigned and indicted before the bar of public opinion.

One remarkable fact, however, has, so far, escaped attention almost entirely, and that is this, that the friends and advocates of international courts of arbitration living in Great Britain and the United States, had planned a great celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Ghent, which ended the last war between these two great countries. It was to be a celebration of a hundred years of peace, in which every civilized nation on earth was to participate. It was planned to begin on Christmas day, 1914, and to be continued during the following year, with thanksgiving services and lectures in all the world, on peace and arbitration. Monuments were to be raised in many places commemorative of the great anniversary.

There can be no doubt that if this celebration had been suffered to materialize as planned, it would have greatly influenced public opinion in all the world in favor of a League of Nations committed to arbitration, as now advocated by President Wilson and other prominent statesmen on both sides of the Atlantic.

Is it not easy to imagine, then, that these plans caused great alarm among the forces of that potentate who falsely claims to be the supreme ruler of this world, and that he exercised all his influence in opposition to the elaborate plans laid by the friends of arbitration? Christ is the Prince of Peace. His great adversary is the Prince of Strife. Their interests clash at every point. To speak plainly, could the Devil, with the power and influence he possesses in the world, do otherwise than try to prevent the children of men from uniting in such a celebration and paying homage to the Prince of Peace?

At all events, the world-war broke out in 1914, just in time to drown all the efforts put forth for a celebration of peace. It came as a thunder-bolt out of a clear sky, unexpected, stunning. It came at a time when men everywhere were crying, "Peace, peace!" Is it not pretty clear that whatever the immediate cause, or causes, of it may have been—and that history must decide—the more remote and the dominant cause will be found in the determination of the adversary of the Son of God to prevent His children from transforming this earth into a paradise in which peace and happiness would dwell?

To the second question, When will the war end? we can only say that it will end just as soon as God, our heavenly Father,

sees that the purposes for which, in His providence, it will serve, have been accomplished. God calls His children to repentance of both national and individual sins, and if they will listen to that voice, the roar of cannon and the groans of the wounded will cease, for He who bade the wind and the waves on the Sea of Galilee to be still, can again bring calm and peace to a troubled world.

Even through this war, God is working out His plans and purposes for the salvation of the world. A great many things must take place before that object, which is discernible all through the history of the human race, can be achieved. There are nations that must be freed from the bondage under which they have been for centuries, in some cases, and they must be restored to the full enjoyment of their inalienable, God-given rights, which include a national life of freedom and self-determination. Barriers to the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith, His servant, must be broken down. The Holy Land must be restored to the Jews, and its boundaries enlarged, as shown to the Prophet Ezekiel in his grand vision. Zion must also be redeemed, and the Lost Tribes hear the gospel and be gathered, and we can see that God is preparing the world for all these events, even through this awful conflict.

God overrules even the works of the adversary and bends them in accordance with His own plans and purposes. And so peace will come, just as soon as God sees that it will further the progress of His kingdom on earth.

J. M. S.

MINUTES OF THE BRISTOL CONFERENCE.

THE semi-annual gathering of the Bristol conference was held in Cory Hall, Cardiff, March 10th, 1918. President George F. Richards, of the European mission, President Stephen H. Winter, of the Bristol conference, and Elder Ivin Hoggan, clerk of the same conference, were in attendance.

The first session was called to order at 10:30 a.m. It commenced by singing, "Did you think to pray?" Prayer was offered by Brother Fred Coombs, of Swindon. The service was continued by singing, "Behold the great Redeemer die." The Sacrament was administered by Brother Walter Neal, of Bristol, and Brother Frederick Day, of the Cardiff branch.

President Stephen H. Winter spoke a few words of welcome, and explained the purpose of the meeting. Then an excellent program was carried out, as follows: "A brief review of the boyhood, first prayer, and vision of Joseph Smith," by Hester Neal, of Bristol; a duet, "Joseph Smith's first prayer," by Alice and Mabel Forward, of Pontypool; and "The vision of Moroni and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon," by Walter Neal, of Bristol;

a number of Scripture passages were recited by Florence Day, Rosamond Edmunds, Violet Day, and Margaret Edmunds; a brief review of the external evidence of the Book of Mormon was given by Frederick Day, of Cardiff, and "The restoration of the priesthood and the organization of the Church," was the subject treated on by Ellen Forward, of Pontypool.

President George F. Richards said that the program, which dealt principally with the early life and labors of the Prophet Joseph Smith, had been very well rendered. The evidences, said he, of the divine mission of the Prophet Joseph and the truth of the gospel revealed through his instrumentality are so numerous and impressive that it would seem as if all who are honestly seeking for truth and spiritual light should thereby be convinced. Many newly baptized members of the Church, however, have met with disappointments similar to that experienced by the boy Joseph when he related to his once friendly minister the circumstances connected with the first vision in which he saw both the Father and the Son. The Scriptures tell us that men cannot come unto God except He draw them and they are but "one of a city and two of a family," also that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The chief difficulty lies in the fact that men do not pursue the proper course in order to receive the Holy Ghost, by which spiritual things may be understood. Peter indicated clearly the course to take, when addressing the people at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. Said he, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." It is the office of the Holy Ghost to bear record of the Father and the Son and of the truth of all things.

The meeting was brought to a close by singing, "We thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet." Benediction by Brother Richard Thomas, of Pontypool.

The afternoon session was called to order at 2: 30. Singing, "Come, O Thou King of kings." Prayer was offered by Brother Henry E. Neal, of Bristol. Continued by singing, "An angel from on high."

After a few words of welcome by President Winter, the names of the general and local authorities were presented by Elder Ivin Hoggan. All were unanimously sustained.

President Winter presented the name of Brother Hori Coombs, and recommended that he be ordained a teacher.

The Articles of Faith were recited by Dennis Thatcher, of the Bath Sunday school.

Elder Ivin Hoggan, the first speaker, dwelt briefly on the first principles of the gospel and on man's free agency, stating that man is not predestined to commit sin, nor is he predestined to do

good. God, he said, will persuade, and help, those who are willing to seek Him, but He will not force anyone to heaven.

A vocal solo was rendered by Sister Doris Palmer, of Bristol.

President George F. Richards was the next speaker. He said that the accomplishments by Joseph Smith during the short period of his mortal existence had marked him as one of the greatest prophets the world has ever known. The speaker here related a number of important visions and divine manifestations received by the Prophet Joseph Smith. He also named some important principles, ordinances, and commandments which had been revealed to the Prophet, and explained their character and necessity in the great plan of human redemption.

The evening session was called to order at 6:30 p.m. It commenced by singing, "Hail to the brightness of Zion's glad morning." Prayer by Brother John Edmunds, of Cardiff. Continued by singing, "Praise ye the Lord."

President Stephen H. Winter expressed his pleasure at being present and at being able to participate in such meetings and to enjoy the Spirit and blessings of the Lord which had been enjoyed in all the meetings. He bore his testimony to the truth of the gospel and spoke words of exhortation and encouragement. He especially exhorted the saints to observe the Word of Wisdom and the law of tithing and explained the promises and blessings of God given to the people who will live up to these commandments. He then spoke briefly on the importance of the saints gathering their genealogy and sending it in, that the work for their dead may be done.

A vocal solo was rendered by Sister Ethel Jenkins, of Bristol.

President George F. Richards then addressed the congregation. He indorsed the remarks of Conference President Stephen H. Winter, and counseled the saints to uphold and sustain President Winter as their leader and adviser, and to live close to the teachings of the gospel. He spoke of the principle of faith and said that while faith is an absolute necessity in order to obtain salvation, it is, of itself, insufficient. The speaker here quoted the third of the Articles of Faith, showing that "through the atonement of Christ all mankind may be saved by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel," important among which are faith, repentance, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, and the laying on of hands by those having authority, for the reception of the Holy Ghost. These principles and ordinances are made effective for man's salvation through the atonement wrought by our Savior. They are just as necessary for the dead as for the living. Those who have died without a knowledge of the gospel will have the privilege of hearing it in the spirit-world, and the ordinances will have to be performed for them vicariously. The world, by departing from the proper mode of baptism (immersion), fulfils the word of Isaiah

(24:4,5). Little children are not eligible for baptism until they reach the age of accountability, which by modern revelation is designated as eight years. Bible-commentary evidence was submitted to show that the principles of faith, repentance, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, were cardinal principles of the gospel and were taught and practiced by the saints of the primitive Church. In conclusion, President Richards bore a fervent testimony to the divine calling of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

The conference was brought to a close by singing the Doxology, and benediction by President Stephen H. Winter.

On Saturday evening, March 9th, a priesthood meeting and social was held, with a good representation from all the branches. Very good reports were given. President Richards spoke words of advice and encouragement.

IVIN HOGGAN, Clerk of Conference.

A SOLDIER'S TESTIMONY.

PRIVATE G. SMITH writes from the front, in part as follows:

"It is with great joy that I try to express my humble testimony to the divinity of the gospel. I know that it is true, and I feel to thank my heavenly Father that I have been able to see the light in its fulness. I have received many blessings at the hand of the Lord.

"I am pleased that some of the boys will listen to the principles of the gospel, for I have had very enjoyable chats with several of them.

"My thoughts very often go back to the time when I was a child. My dear mother and father used to teach me to pray, and on Sundays would get us ready for Sunday school, and this has greatly impressed on me the need of good parents, that will show their children the way they should go. But I never seemed to grasp much of the truth, until our family joined the Church. It was then that I began to see the light. Since I have joined the army I have missed the Sunday school and the Church, especially while I was in France, for other churches are lacking that which the Latter-day Saints possess."

FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

Baptism.—A baptismal service was held on Saturday, March 9th, 1918, at Manchester, Manchester conference, when eleven converts were added to the fold. President Lester F. Hewlett made appropriate remarks. Elders Robert W. Cluff and John H. Wilding officiated. All the candidates were confirmed at the water's edge.

Transfers.—Elders Henry H. Parker, of the Scottish conference, and Robert W. Cluff, of the Manchester conference, were transferred, March 7th, 1918, to the Manchester and London conferences respectively.

Releases and Departures.—Elders Richard C. Wilkin, Francis M. Skinner, and Herbert P. Haight of the Scottish, Norwich, and London conferences respectively, were honorably released March 15th, 1918, and on the same day left Liverpool on their homeward journey.

Appointments.—Elder Leslie T. Harper succeeded Elder Richard C. Wilkin as president of the Scottish conference March 1st, 1918, at which time Elder Wilkin left the conference to visit saints and friends in the mission prior to returning home.

Elder Orial L. Anderson was appointed president of the Norwich conference March 14th, 1918, to succeed Elder Francis M. Skinner, who was being released to return home.

Branch Organized.—President Leroy S. Dickson and Elder Walton E. Bodily recently visited Eastwood, Nottingham conference, where they called a special meeting with the saints. The services were well attended, and all present expressed a desire that a branch be organized. On Sunday, March 10th, President Leroy S. Dickson visited that same place again, and a branch was organized with the following officers: Brother William Mullinger, president; Sister Beatrice Papworth, secretary; Brother Wilford G. Thompson, treasurer and organist. A Sunday school was also organized.

Socials.—In honor of two brethren who were home on a fourteen-day leave from France, the Relief Society of the Rochdale branch, Manchester conference, gave a successful social on February 23rd, 1918. The program consisted of songs, recitations, etc., and refreshments were served by the sisters.

A farewell social was held at Deseret, London, Tuesday evening, March 12th, 1918, in honor of Elder Herbert P. Haight, who was about to leave for his home. A large number of saints and friends were present. The program was conducted by President James Gunn McKay, and those called upon to render entertainment responded ably. Elder Haight related some of his experiences as a missionary and President McKay spoke of the efficient work he had performed. President William D. Lewis, of the Hull conference, commented, interestingly, on the program rendered and the spirit of the occasion.

Branch Conferences.—The conference of the Sunderland branch, Newcastle conference, convened on Sunday, March 3rd, 1918. Four sessions were held, including a priesthood and lady-missionary meeting, which was held the day following. All the services were

well attended, and a splendid spirit prevailed. At the afternoon services on Sunday the branch presidency was reorganized, with Brother William W. France as president, and Brother John H. Bradshaw as first counselor. President William J. Loosle spoke on tithe-paying. At the evening session Elder David Bennion spoke on obedience. President Loosle's subject was "Mormonism."

The Bradford branch, Leeds conference, held a conference on Sunday, March 10th, this year. President Joseph S. Nelson and Elder Ether L. Marley were in attendance. The Sunday-school held meeting as usual. In the evening session, which was well attended, reports were given by President Mary E.Sanders, of the Relief Society, Superintendent Alfred E. Higgins, of the Sunday School, and President Jesse Knight, of the Mutual Improvement Association. A solo was rendered by Brother Alfred E. Higgins. The remaining time was occupied by President Joseph S. Nelson. Branch President George H. Higgins had charge of the meeting.

A branch conference was held at Watford, London conference, on Sunday, March 10th, 1918. President James Gunn McKay and Elder Herbert P. Haight were present. The first session commenced at 2:30 p.m. The Sunday School children gave an exhibition of their class and memory work, and Elder Haight spoke on the importance and value of the training of the children in the work connected with the gospel. The evening session was well attended. The lady missionaries gave short talks, and President McKay spoke on the power of high ideals.

DIED.

LOMAS.—On December 14th, 1917, of cerebral hemorrhage, Brother Thomas Lomas, of the Coventry branch. Deceased was born September 29th, 1874, at Stockport, Cheshire, England; baptized December 19th, 1909, by Elder Niel S. Forsyth, and confirmed the same day by Elder Elisha Peck, Jr.

CONTENTS:

Be Ye Perfect 177
The Gospel of Christ Dispels Fear 179
A Conception of Life and Its Purpose 181
Gathering Pre-ordained 183
Editorial: War Stories and Thoughts Suggested... ... 184
Minutes of the Bristol Conference 187
A Soldier's Testimony 190
From the Mission Field 190

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